FE Week

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HOT NEWS FE Week ANALYSIS AND JOBS

Monday, November 26, 2012
www.feweek.co.uk





Matthew Hancock looks at the No Free Lunch? lolly, presented to him by Kirsty Wark on the platform of the AoC annual conference

No free lunches?

FE Minister Matthew Hancock was non-committal on supporting free lunches for FE students when pushed on the issue. Newsnight presenter Kirsty Wark handed him a No Free Lunch? campaign lollypop and asked will you support free lunches? He replied: "I'm always in favour of lunch."

AoC have been pushing for "fairness for college students at lunchtime" as 16 to 18 year-olds from a disadvantaged background who study at an FE or sixth form college do not get free school lunches whereas their counterparts in school sixth forms do.

Editorial on page 4

Report warned of merger costs

Holly Welham
@HollyWelham

A cash-strapped college that recently got a government warning about its finances went ahead with a "costly" merger despite a report critical of the move, it has emerged.

Under-fire K College, in Kent, has a £6.4m deficit and in August became the first provider to get a government warning that could lead to the withdrawal of Skills Funding Agency (SFA) cash.

It was formed of a merger in April 2010 between South Kent College and West Kent College - but just five months earlier a report, seen by *FE Week*, warned about the move.

It appears to have been written by a senior figure at the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) - the predecessor body to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) - and refers to criticisms in an earlier due diligence report on the merger by South Kent College.

"This [earlier] report highlighted that West Kent College faces significant financial challenges and lacked spare cash reserves to support the merger," said the LSC report.

"The merger appeared to be in trouble if the Learning and Skills Council could not offer merger support or the governors of West Kent College decided to reject the merger due to a lack of willingness to borrow funds."

The LSC report further mentioned a report by accountants KPMG to support their criticism of the merger.

"I could not quickly identify the business case for this merger when reading this document although I appreciate that there are always generic valid reasons for merger, including economies of scale," said the LSC report.

An SFA spokesperson declined to comment on the report, but said: "The consultation for the South Kent College and West Kent College merger was handled in line with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the former LSC's merger process that was in place at that time."

Nobody from K College was immediately available for comment.

However, the college's website stated South Kent College governors chose West Kent College as their preferred merger partner following a KPMG report commissioned in 2008 by the LSC, which recommended merger as the best course of action for South Kent College students.

The college's financial problems saw principal Bill Fearon resign on the same day staff went on strike over plans to cut around 150 jobs.

FE Minister Matthew Hancock has also been in talks with local MPs on the future of the college, while a spokesperson from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) said de-merging the two colleges remained an option.

The college has blamed its deficit on falling student numbers, funding cuts from central government, the cost of running six sites and a delay in money owed from the sale of land.

The college was asked by the SFA to work with Learning and Skills Improvement Service to balance its budget in the next two years having been issued a notice of concern.

Graham Morley interview



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David Hughes talks FE Guild



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Campus round-up



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Come along and see us on **Stand 54, Hall 3 and Stand F16** at the AoC Conference, ICC, 20th-22nd November 2012. See back page for more information.

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TRIBAL

Edition 47

FE Week is the only newspaper dedicated to news, analysis, jobs and fun in the FE sector.

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Top #aocannual12 tweets:

@JulianGravatt
EFA and SFA CEOs both describe a world with fewer people in govt, more trust in institutions and more accountability to public

@agladheight
Not entirely inspired by Gorden Marsden & Karen Buck MPs - innovation needed in the shdw cabinet?

@mattpearson
Gove uninterested in vocational education, no major speech in this for 2 years. Buck argues this is intellectual snobbery

@Simon_nf
Should 14 yr olds be allowed to enrol at colleges directly? A look of confusion on the faces of Buck and Marsden

@AndyWKC
Labour politicians uninspiring, short of ideas and often ill informed. What a missed opportunity!

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Shadow minister's care blow for FE leaders

Eleanor Radford
@eleanorradford

The Shadow minister for Education has "disappointed" FE leaders after casting doubt on colleges' ability to "care and support" 14-year-olds recruited full-time from schools.

Labour MP Karen Buck's comments came at AoC's annual conference when she was asked if she supported government proposals that could see pupils directly funded to complete a mixture of GCSEs and vocational qualifications at FE colleges.

"One of the things that worries me, and the conference may shout me down, is that there is sometimes a risk that very young people going into college may not get the full pastoral care and support they would want," said Ms Buck.

The shadow minister's comments were received with boos and came just a day after FE Minister Matthew Hancock declined to give a firm answer on when this proposal might go ahead.

Gary Warke, deputy principal at Hull College which recently took on 80 14-year-olds full-time, said youngsters "absolutely had the right to the full range of vocational courses" available in FE.

"We have been a major champion of this and have taken on full-time 14-year-olds who have gained confidence and progression moving forward after coming to us."

He said Hull College had provided assembly and sports access, religious education and secure playgrounds.

"They have loved it," he said of the young recruits.

"They get treated like an adult and have access to a broad provision of courses otherwise not available."

Marian Plant, principal of North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, said she "absolutely disagreed" with Ms Buck and could "show absolute evidence to the contrary."

College leaders will still have to wait for a date when the recruitment proposal might go ahead.

"We are working on plans for colleges directly recruiting pupils aged 14 and 15 to be directly funded," Mr Hancock said in a speech on Tuesday.

When pushed on the matter, he said: "Hopefully we will hear in the next two months."

He said he understood September 2013 deadlines loomed and added "we will have an answer by then."

Colleges have continued to lobby the government. An Association of Colleges (AoC) spokesperson said the need for this change had been a "key point" of their manifesto.

Martin Doel, chief executive of the AoC, said: This is something we and our members are very keen to work towards. But: if this is to happen, it needs to happen quickly. This was a key recommendation of the Wolf Report and colleges are well-placed to deliver high quality provision to young people in this age group."



In her report Alison Wolf recommended the government "make explicit the legal right of colleges to enrol students under 16 and ensure that funding procedures make this practically possible".

The 14-16 Implementation Group, made-up of AoC, Department for Education (DfE) and Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) representatives, has been working with DfE and has produced recommendations that have gone to the Secretary of State and Ministers.

Functional skills funding to double

Eleanor Radford
@EleanorRadford

The FE Minister has pledged to double the amount of money available for adult English and maths skills branding it a "scandal"many Britons "couldn't read or add up properly".

Matthew Hancock (pictured far right) made the announcement welcomed by FE leaders during a speech at AoC's annual conference in Birmingham .

"And there is one area where Britain should lead the world, but where sinfully we have allowed ourselves to fall behind," Mr Hancock told the packed main hall at the ICC.

"Here in these islands, we invented the English language that now dominates the globe. It is the global language: of trade, of culture, of diplomacy, and of the arts. And our history is littered with many of the advances in mathematics too.

"Yet too many of our young people cannot read or write, or add up properly," he said.

"This is a scandal and it must change."

He said to "show the value" the government attached to English and maths he was "doubling the amount we pay for adult English and Maths functional skills, and for English and Maths within an apprenticeship."

But the Skills Funding Agency declined to tell *FE Week* when the rate increase would become available nor where funding would come from to afford the rate increase.

A spokesperson said: "We are implementing some rate increases for English and maths qualifications. This is in advance of the introduction of the new funding system in 2013/14. Further details on this will be available on our website later this week."

The National Institute for Adults Continuing Education (NIACE) "warmly" welcomed Mr Hancock's news.

Carol Taylor, director of development and research, said the organisation had called for recognition that all adults "need to be able to read and write to a functional level" to play a full-part in their family, in work and society.

"Over 3000 people took part in NIACE maths challenges at the recent Skills Show, and many asked for advice on how to improve their English and maths," she said.

"One woman was able to do entry level English at college but unable to do maths as the college was not able to offer her a class."

"We will continue to work with colleges and providers to help them develop functional skills for all learners, regardless of their age or the stage of their learning."

The minister also set out his intention to consult on rigorous 16-19 vocational qualifications, to help ensure minimum levels of performance were applied equally to college and school sixth forms.



The 157 Group, an organisation that represents 27 FE colleges, supported this.

Marilyn Hawkins, group chair, said: "We are pleased these announcements acknowledge the need to ensure high-quality pathways are available for all learners. They reflect our view that colleges provide a vital element in the learning of 14 to 24-year-olds of all abilities."

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, added, "We welcome the minister's reaffirmed commitment to levelling the quality playing field between schools and colleges, something for which we have long argued."

Looking forward to the Richard Review

Chris Henwood

@chris_henwood

Employers should be given greater ownership of the apprenticeship system, according to National Apprenticeship Service chief executive David Way.

He spoke to *FE Week* at the Association of Colleges conference, in Birmingham, where he offered a cautious prediction of the forthcoming Richard Review.

"I have some ideas about what I'd like to see in the review, but it's important not to just take it in isolation," said Mr Way.

"It's possible to discern the main trends likely to be coming out of all these reviews, and one of these is a sense of questioning how we can ensure employers have greater ownership of the system."

The Richard Review was launched by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills just before the summer.

It was tasked with taking a medium to long-term look at the future of apprenticeships in England, identifying best practice and ensuring future apprenticeships meet the needs of the changing economy, and ensuring apprenticeships deliver the qualifications and skills employers need to reach world class benchmarks.

Its author, entrepreneur and former Dragons' Den star, Doug Richard said he expected it to be published by the end of the month.

"I've put a lot of effort into increasing the type, the calibre and the depth of employer involvement and that's a clear message of the review," he exclusively told FE Week this month.

It follows reviews into the same subject by the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee and jeweller Jason Holt.

He spoke to *FE Week* at the Skills Show this month, where he said: "I have spoken and Doug Richard had read my review – he was even testing me on it.

"I think, or hope, he may have looked at it and Professor Alison Wolf's and looked to build on them."

Mr Holt also said he was on a panel that was looking to put in place the careers guidance boost recommendations of his own review.

"I'm on the Holt Review implementation team that meets every quarter," he said.

"We've already met once and we're there to hold the government's toes to the fire in terms of getting the things done that it said it would.



David Way is interviewed by Chris Henwood in the mobile newsroom on the top floor of the Hyatt Birmingham

"I really push the review on that team otherwise what's the point.

He added: "It's really refreshing for the government to have set up this team to make sure my review doesn't fall by the wayside. That, at least, should be celebrated.

"I was disappointed around the schools agenda and their promotion of apprenticeships.

"I wanted to see inspired head teachers who look beyond funding agendas applauded.

The other point was about connections between business and schools and their local communities.

"In Switzerland they give schoolchildren weekly advice and information on careers from the age of 11 to 16. They hear from all trades — banking, engineering and so on.

"They end up with a real sense of the world of work. It just makes you question whether we are doing enough."

Employer ownership criticised as 'top-slicing'

Eleanor Radford

@eleanorradford

An FE leader blasted new training incentives for businesses worth £150m as "top slicing" funds from the adult skills budget.

Maggie Galliers, president of the Association of Colleges (AoC), was speaking at this year's annual AoC conference where FE Minister Matthew Hancock announced the cash pot for businesses to help "build a skilled workforce".

During his speech at Birmingham's ICC Mr Hancock said businesses across the country could bid for a share of the funds to create the training schemes they needed to "grow their companies". The fund is the second round of the Employer Ownership Pilot (EOP) which is already giving nearly £70 million to companies including Nissan, Whitbread and GE Aviation, with projects ranging from extending skills training to local suppliers, to doubling the number of female apprentices.

"For Britain to compete we need as a nation to deliver the skills employers need," said Mr Hancock.

"This is a unique opportunity for companies across all industries to secure their futures by addressing their skills needs now.

"I would encourage businesses – large and small – to be ambitious and innovative in their vision for how the fund can help them grow, from creating new apprenticeship programmes to setting up specialist training academies.

Ms Galliers said AoC were fully supportive of their underlying purpose of "unlocking even greater investment" by employers in training.

But she reacted saying: "But, and I am afraid there is a 'but', these pilots are funded by top slicing from the adult skills budget. And this is not the only initiative vying for our money.

"The emerging demands around Local Enterprise Partnerships and City Deals could mean that as a sector we have less flexibility and less resource and spend too much of our time chasing funding pots."

Government investment in EOP for rounds one and two now totals £250 million.

The other 34 successful round one projects were announced in September. These included Nissan's programme to bridge the skills gap for more than 3,600 technical staff, new recruits and supply chain workers involved in producing new models and working with evolving technologies.

David Way, chief executive of the National Apprenticeship Service, supported the scheme.

He said: "While I am delighted to see many more employers offering apprenticeships every week, we welcome this important employer-led approach. This will help to achieve our ambition to see accelerated growth and higher quality standards for apprenticeships.

"The Employer Ownership Pilot will encourage a fresh and creative approach to stimulating employers to offer more opportunities to young people. This initiative will enable even more employers to collaborate and lead to the further expansion of apprenticeships. This is vital for ensuring employers of all sizes and in vital growth sectors invest in and benefit from apprenticeships.

"We look forward to working closely with UKCES, BIS and all of our employers in developing and delivering high quality apprenticeships."

The round two prospectus is now available online at www.ukces.org.uk/employerownership and the deadline for bids is February 28, 2013.

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Editor's comment

No free bananas

With FE leaders increasingly talking of challenging times, sector minister Matthew Hancock's first speech at the Association of College's annual conference was never going to be easy.

But anticipation grew as the minister tweeted a photo of himself preparing off-stage (see below).

And then came the speech. It bore a necessary gift in funding rate increases for functional skills.

Sadly, the gift many will have wanted most did not come. He did not announce that colleges could recruit full-time 14 to 15-year-olds next year, although the optimists believe this is simply a delay while parity of funding with schools is resolved.

On the topic of gifts and parity of funding, the BBC's Kirsty Wark presented the minister with a No Free Lunch lolly. Would he back the AoC campaign?

Naturally, he made no commitment, but if the money were to be found it would not only send a message of fairness, it would make a positive difference to many potential and current FE learners. Let's all get behind this campaign.



"Last minute prep for my #aocAnnual12 speech - banana and a glass of water"

Nick Linford, editor

Panel sets out to define FE Guild



From left: Martin Doel, Peter Davies, David Hughes and Graham Hoyle on the panel at the Association of Colleges annual conference and exhibition 2012

Chris Henwood

@chris_henwood

Leaders of the new FE Guild proposals have told of their hopes for the new body, but said they were prepared for it to be rejected by the sector.

A consultation on the guild has launched and Association of Colleges (AoC) chief executive Martin Doel said he wouldn't predict the results.

"If the consultation comes back saying the sector doesn't want a guild, or an improvement agency, then we'll have to conclude that's the case and go back to government and say that's the case," he told a Q&A audience of delegates at the AoC conference in Birmingham.

"You can't have a consultation and predict what it will say."

The Q&A had been put on as an extra session on Wednesday, November 21, for delegates to find out how proposals for the guild — a single body to set professional standards and codes of behaviour as well as develop qualifications - were progressing.

An early stage consultation has been launched to feed into a summary of proposals due to be drawn up and sent out for further consultation in around two months. The plan is for the guild to be up-and-running from August.

"We've put on this extra session because the guild is so topical and important," said Mr Doel.

"We've got an extremely aggressive timescale to work towards, but I think it's achievable."

Further education Minister Mathew Hancock announced last month the AoC and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) had won government approval to "take forward" the FE Guild proposals.

David Hughes, chief executive of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, has already been appointed independent chair of a steering group on the guild, and Peter Davies, former City Lit principal, was unveiled as its project team leader.

They both appeared on the Q&A panel, along with the AoC's Mr Doel and AELP chief executive Graham Hoyle.

Mr Hughes said there had already been talks with senior figures at the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), which looks likely to close as its role is taken up by the guild.

"We've been very careful to include LSIS chief executive Rob Wye and chair Dame Ruth Silver in discussions," he said.

"It must be a very worrying time for LSIS staff and we need to be careful about quashing any myths and rumours about the guild.

"It's very clear to me we need to learn from what LSIS has done and to learn from it where the sector's pressure points are.

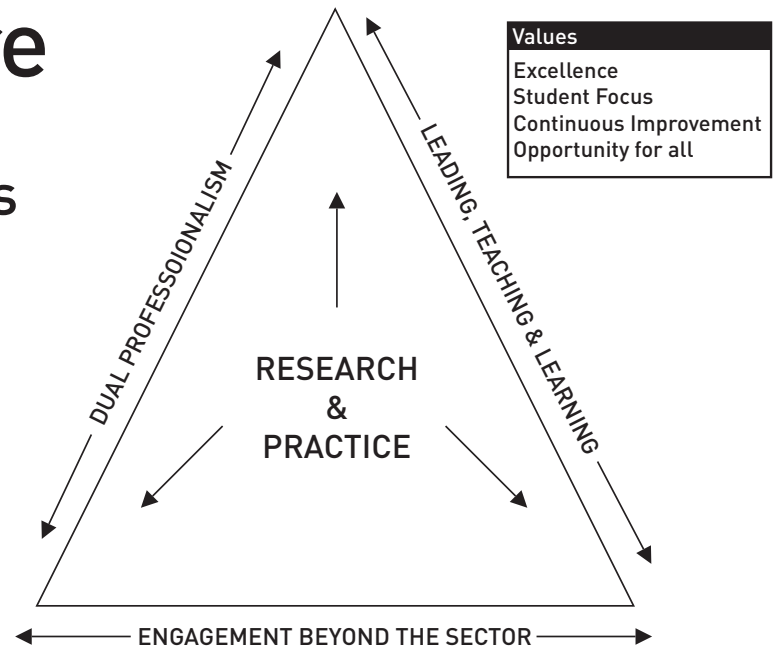
"We have an opportunity to own an organisation within the sector that does something quite modest, but really important that is about pulling the sector together and you need that."

Email Mr Davies on peter_davies@aoc.co.uk or feguild@aoc.co.uk to have your say on the guild.

The FE Guild core

Key contractual milestones

- Communications strategy November 2012
- Consultation document January 2013
- Implementation plan end of March 2013
- Initial operational date for the FE Guild August 2013



Correction

Put simply, there is no college called FE College.

Or at least if there is, it wasn't the subject of last week's page 4 tale headlined: "Women 'not at' FE Colleges table."

So, it should have been lower case college. Hopefully there's no Lower Case College.

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of *FE Week*?
If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.

FE Week profile

Graham Morley ~ his story

Janet Murray
@jan_murray

The principal of South Staffordshire College speaks to *FE Week*

"I hated school with a passion, hated going every single day and even now don't look back on it and say those days were the happiest of my life like a lot of people do," says Graham Morley, Chief Executive Principal of South Staffordshire College.

Being the youngest in the year, disliking football and in the top set for everything, he never felt he fitted in at Oldfield Boys' School in Uttoxeter. Despite his academic aptitude – particularly in maths – Morley "did one piece of homework in four years" and left school without a single qualification.

He started a carpentry course at college, but having decided he didn't like the teacher, switched to bricklaying and found he was pretty good at it. On completing his apprenticeship, he joined the family construction business where he worked until his mid twenties, picking up higher national certificates in building and structural engineering along the way.

But despite having a close relationship with his dad, Morley couldn't shake the feeling that he should "cut his own path in life." A keen surfer with who was determined not to become the "and sons" in his father's business, he took a part-time job teaching bricklaying at Stoke College."I found I was a good teacher and I'm not embarrassed to say that," he says.

After combining part-time teaching with construtction work for a few years, he decided to take a risk, accepting a full-time teaching contract, covering a teacher who was on long-term absence. But when his colleague returned, much earlier than anticipated – just two days after Morley's eldest daughter was born – he suddenly found himself out of a job.

Having made the decision to move out of the family business – and disappointed his father in process – it was a devastating blow. But despite the tough economic climate, Morley resisted the temptation to return to the company. "I knew that if I went back, it would have meant that someone else [in the company] would probably have lost their job eventually," he says. "It sounds saintly, but it wasn't like that. I was afraid to be trapped in the family business."

After six months out of work, Morley landed a job at Stafford College, where he worked as a lecturer until 1989, when a brush with death changed his outlook. Having been diagnosed with a serious illness, he was given just days to live but, after a five and a half hour emergency operation, pulled through, against the odds. "Friday 13th [the date of the operation] is always quite a lucky day for me," he says. "I wasn't afraid of dying; in some ways it would have been a relief. But it changed me. I grew up."

A few months later, Morley returned to work with a germ of an idea. At a time when many colleges were cutting back on construction courses (mainly because they were expensive to run) he put forward a radical plan to expand provision at the college - and landed himself the job of head of construction in the process. When his plan proved profitable for the college, he took on additional responsibilities, and in the late 1990s, moved to Stoke College as head of faculty for engineering and construction before becoming director of curriculum at South Cheshire college.

But when it was suggested that he take a secondment as vice principal at nearby Cannock Chase College, which had just had an unsatisfactory Ofsted inspection, he wasn't keen. His own college was due an inspection any day, and he wanted to be there to lead the team through it.

After much cajoling from the then principal of Stoke College, David Collins, he reluctantly agreed to give it a go. But after six months – during which time the college improved to a 'satisfactory' Ofsted rating – he found Cannock had got under his skin.

When a permanent post of principal was advertised – and despite the fact the college had been earmarked for merger by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) - he applied for the job. "I loved the people and the students and I could see that I could make a difference and a contribution to the town... so I took the risk that it could all go belly up," he says.

> "I found I was a good teacher and I'm not embarrassed to say that"

That was in 2005 and (having fought off the LSC's proposed merger during his first year at the college) over the years that followed, he began exploring the idea of a strategic merger with nearby Rodbaston College and Tamworth and Lichfield Colleges. "None of them were in a bad position, financially or qualitatively, but none of them were big enough to survive in today's world," he says.

South Staffordshire College came into being in January 2009, after he had put his career on the line for a second time, going against "the best field in the country" Morley became principal of the newly-formed institution. He recalls: "I found that interview really difficult because, for the first time in my life, I really wanted that job, but there was a good chance that I wasn't going to get it because I'd never run a college of that size before…but the board saw what they wanted to see, I suppose, because I got the job."



One of the biggest challenges for all principals at the moment is dealing with changes to FE funding he says. And he is particularly concerned about changes to the adult skills budget (and in particular the introduction of FE loans) and how this will affect peoples' ability to access education. "I understand the government is saying that they [learners] will only pay it back if they are earning more than 21k a year, but the prospect of someone taking on a loan when they are struggling to pay for food and the family and rent and stuff like that…they are not in the right place to take on a lifetime commitment.

I worry for individuals concerned and I worry for the country in a sense, as all the indicators are that skilled jobs are going to grow and the unskilled and semi-skilled jobs will decline."

Now 57, Morley says he has no intention of retiring any time soon, but is clear he doesn't want to become "that principal who is shuffling down the corridor when everyone wishes he wasn't there." He is clear that he wants to leave at the top of his game.

And for now, what continues to drive him is ensuring the very best outcomes for learners. "I believe the students should be at the heart of what we do, it's the real secret of our success. I've also got a great team around me, great staff at the college where I'm at and we're all there for one reason – we change lives. At the end of the day, I'm a bricklayer. I'm still that guy on the beach who used to surf…that's who I am. And above all, I hope I'm human."

It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book?
Papillon by Henri Charrière

What did you want to be when you were younger?
Lorry driver

What do you do to switch off from work?
Photography

If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be?
Neil Armstrong

What would your super power be?
See further into the future

FE Week Experts

Critical skills for the 21st century

Colleges should be leading the way to creating entrepreneurial communities, say Andy Pellant and Lynne Sedgmore

Entrepreneurship is a key word on many people's lips at the moment. The working world of the 21st century is one in which resilience, enterprise and personal qualities are as important as skills and knowledge; one in which coping with change is inevitable, and job and wealth creation are critical.

> "A critical element of the learning experience will be access to the Gazelle entrepreneurs"

High unemployment and fiscal constraints mean that our society needs to foster and support more job creators than job seekers, to invest in those with a strong sense of their ability to be entrepreneurial.

FE colleges are natural places in which this can happen. Generating successful job creators and entrepreneurs can only benefit the community and help to stimulate the economy — essential roles for all colleges.

But such important work requires a new form of leadership, one that builds on the sector's strong capacity to deliver high quality core business skills and qualifications, but one that also has a clear vision of the future. It requires a leadership that recognises that to produce entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial ways of learning, a college must itself be entrepreneurial in all that it does.

The Gazelle Group's Enterprising Futures publication shows how the truly entrepreneurial college can be enterprising and risk-taking - while encouraging staff to behave similarly.

Gazelle was set up with the intention of achieving an identifiable group of enterprising colleges within five years. But already it is reaching into the whole sector, as well as internationally.

The Association of Colleges' conference next week will host the launch of the Gazelle Entrepreneurial College Leadership Programme, supported in its development by the 157 Group and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

This programme, which will pilot its first groups in February and March next year, will be challenging, disruptive and supportive — and of course, highly entrepreneurial in its design and learning processes.





Drawing on a powerful partnership with Babson College and Babson Global, the Gazelle leadership programme will offer a powerful way to unlock untapped potential and ambition, introducing participants to designing and implementing an entrepreneurial college.

> "A college must itself be entrepreneurial in all that it does"

It will signpost the way to redefining colleges as a 'whole community learning resource', and as a space in which entrepreneurial activity is not only nurtured but in which it can flourish.

A critical element of the learning experience will be access to the Gazelle entrepreneurs — well-known figures from the business world who have a commitment to entrepreneurial learning within further education.

We look forward to sharing more details about it at an AoC conference workshop, letting you find out how all principals and professionals within FE colleges can access this powerful developmental opportunity.

Andy Pellant, is associate director of the Gazelle Group; Lynne Sedgmore is director of 157 Group

Should we look forward to 'co-opetition'?

Sixth-form colleges must not rest on the laurels of past successes, says Mark Bramwell. First up, let's tackle the relationship with academies...

Sixth-form colleges are proving to be robust with most achieving high success rates and good or outstanding Ofsted grades.

And most are oversubcribed - despite the demographic drop in the number of eligible students.

But we need to critically assess future options for this success to continue. Looking ahead, some colleges are worried about being marginalised and about their long-term viability. The prospect of a 6 per cent funding cut over the medium term and increasing competition from new providers are serious concerns. I hope to address some of these issues at next week's AoC annual conference where we will explore strategic issues with college leaders.

First, let's look at our successes so far, including influencing government policy. For instance, funding rates between school sixth forms and colleges are being equalised. Sixth-form colleges' (SFC) capital funding is now largely in line with academies. The unfair higher benchmark used in SFC inspections by Ofsted is to go in March.

There are more inequalities to face, of course. However, with the national emphasis on value for money, high standards and social mobility, SFCs should be confident of more success.

Looming on the horizon is a growing debate about the relationship between SFCs and academies. It is clear that the Department for Education and the Office of the Schools Commissioner are enthusiastic about SFCs sponsoring academies but currently only four have such a role.

Should SFCs respond to the new political landscape through more involvement in academies, as is the case with general further education colleges? They would have a lot to offer having left local authority control themselves in 1993 and having flourished through self management and governance - although their small leadership teams could be an obstacle.

And should SFCs apply for 16-19 academy status? Some benefits might follow. For example, a VAT rebate could be worth £200,000 a year, but there is no guarantee that academy status would bring this; free meals could be available to eligible students and the academy brand is at the heart of Government policy. Would 16-19 academy status move SFCs to a position of greater influence? Would it bring quality improvement funds not currently available?

There could be a downside, of course. There is a concern that one day, perhaps under a future Government, academies could be returned to the local authority fold (or some other commissioning agency). The SFC brand is distinct, but it could be lost in a sea of 3,000 or 4,000 academies (there are currently 2,400). Would the SFC sector divide into a two or three-way split over this strategic decision?

The old call for funding was for equity across school sixth forms and colleges. Today it is about calling for equity between 11-16 funding, 16-18 funding and perhaps post-19 funding. Currently a SFC student attracts £3,900, an 11-16 pupil over £5,000 and an HE student over £8,000. With less public funding SFCs might diversify their funding streams. Many already do with adult learning, higher education, international work or work-based learning. However, the challenge is to diversify and to keep an eye on the ball of ever-growing accountability for the quality of 16-18 teaching and learning.

Finally, in challenging times, can SFCs take a leaf out of the work of other organisations and collaborate even more with each other while remaining competitors? 'Co-opetition' would mean more strategic alliances between SFCs, more federated models or relevant shared services options. This could help to retain the distinctiveness of SFCs while strengthening their ability to survive and flourish in the new educational landscape.



Mark Bramwell is the AoC's associate director of sixth-form college

Mark Bramwell is the AoC's associate director of sixth-form colleges

FE Week Experts

One size does not fit all

A watchful eye on quality becomes more important as FE colleges increasingly deliver higher education, says Dr Stephen Jackson

The tectonic plates of UK higher education are shifting with students basing their study choices on changing criteria.

Providers newer to the game have been eager to compete with the university sector by offering significant benefits in terms of cost, location and flexibility. Privately-funded providers are competing fiercely to recruit students on to the specialist programmes that they can deliver at a lower cost than the traditional sector.

Meanwhile, FE colleges can provide higher education programmes that meet local demands, are competitively priced and available 'at the end of the street'.

It is increasingly clear that one size does not fit all in this new world of student choice and provider offers.

However, we believe there should be one measure of quality assurance so that HE students, wherever and whatever they study, can be guaranteed nationally agreed academic standards and quality.

Around 12 per cent of UK higher education is delivered in FE colleges - although that percentage is expected to increase.

For more than a decade, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has monitored the standards and quality of college higher education — first via subject and academic reviews, then through our Integrated Quality and Enhancement Reviews (IQER). These were the first bespoke review methods for higher education delivered in FE colleges.

IQER taught us that colleges do a good job in delivering higher education; that what they do is broadly compatible with what universities do, although in a different way and sometimes for different reasons. And IQER has led to a maturing in the sector, a reduction in the paternalistic relationships between awarding bodies and their colleges, and an increase in a sense of parity and self-confidence.

But we have now introduced the Review of College Higher Education (RCHE). Why? It goes back to what I said earlier about having one measure of quality assurance — a single framework — for all UK higher education.

RCHE brings us a step closer to this by applying the same criteria, expectations and judgments as our institutional reviews of universities.

We have worked with FE colleges to develop the new method and, so far, the response has been positive. It's easy to understand why. It's not an inspection, it uses peers to review and judge the colleges, and it can be a useful catalyst for change.

We want colleges to benefit from review by getting an external perspective on their higher education provision, the standards of the awards they offer, the quality of their learning opportunities, the quality of the information that they provide and the measures that they take to enhance what they do.

Colleges will be able to make direct comparisons between what they do and achieve, and what their colleagues in universities do and achieve. They will work to the same guidance and the same set of expectations we provide to higher education institutions with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. They will be able to use the action plan from the review as a planning tool.

As with IQER, we will publish the outcomes of every RCHE review, showcasing the good practice that our reviewers find in each college as well as the recommendations we ask them to action.



We are inviting FE colleges to join universities and other UK higher education institutions in subscribing to QAA, as a signal of the maturity and confidence of the college higher education part of the sector. **Visit www.qaa.ac.uk/AboutUs/subscribing-institutions/Pages/Applying-to-QAA.aspx for details on how to sign-up.**

Dr Stephen Jackson is director of reviews at the QAA



FE Week Experts

Establishing a guild for the FE sector

Another day, another FE body - but with sector professionalism on the line, the FE Guild is something everybody should be getting behind, explains David Hughes

Agreeing to chair a group setting up yet another representative body for FE is probably a career-limiting move unless there is a very good reason for another one. So I am pleased to say I think there is indeed a great need for a new body to take a leadership role in FE and I am excited by the unique opportunity we have to enhance the status and reputation of the sector.

The challenge we face in FE is huge because the world is changing rapidly around us and we need to serve young people and adults who are grappling with changes in society, work and technology which can sometimes seem bewildering.

We need to develop the sector to be fleet of foot, to keep up with changes in work, to use technology to deliver learning which equips people with the skills they will need to keep learning and be resilient to the changes around them.

The best in the sector do this day in day out, so we know that FE can do it, but we need stronger leadership and focus from employers, practitioners and their representative bodies to set standards which everyone aspires to.

The new guild provides us with the chance for the sector to come together just as the government and its agencies have retreated.

It also represents a moment of truth for the FE sector.

Can the sector take responsibility, collectively for its own future when part of its very strength is the diversity of organisations and learners in it?

> "I believe the diversity of learning, learners and organisations in FE should be celebrated"

I believe the diversity of learning, learners and organisations in FE should be celebrated as a key strength and that a new guild can play a leadership role across it.

A clear focus on delivering and supporting great learning to all adults across their lives will bind and unite the diverse voices, interests and organisations.

What we need is for employers and practitioners and the organisations which represent them to come together to make this work on behalf of the adults and young people who are served by the sector.

I am certain we can develop a new organisation which advances professionalism, improves leadership and governance and helps to deliver even better learning opportunities across England.

It will be this clarity of purpose which we will use to bring people together and keep us all focussed.

I was invited to chair the steering group, I believe, for two reasons. Firstly, because of the unique place and purpose of National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) in advocating more, different and better learning for all adults.

This means we are not representing any particular interest group, other than learners.

Secondly, I hope that I have a reputation for getting things done and there is a lot of work to be done in order to build consensus about the purpose, role, structure and governance of the FE Guild and I hope to be one of the people driving that forward over the coming months.

We are planning now for an intense period of engagement with employers and practitioners and representative bodies to debate and discuss what the FE Guild should focus on, how it should be set-up and what the governance arrangements will look like.

That debate and discussion needs to be thorough and professional and I would urge everyone with any interest in FE to get involved.



We cannot afford for people with positive ideas and contributions not to come forward in the new year to enter the debate. Part of my role as chair of the steering group is to support an inclusive process in which all views are heard.

Our aim is to have the guild up-and-running in mid-2013, starting to develop its role and its activities and having an impact in the next academic year.

In order to achieve that we will work hard, consult properly, listen well and be decisive because all of us came into FE to support and deliver great learning and the guild can take a critical leadership role in achieving that.

David Hughes, NIACE chief executive and chair of the FE Guild steering group

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It's here! The new Level 2 Certificate in the Principles of Dementia Care

This new QCF qualification is designed to help learners develop their knowledge and understanding of dementia and the principles of caring for people with the condition. Listed at 123 glh, this full Level 2 programme is funded under the Adult Skills Budget in 2012/13. The pack comprises seven mandatory units, condensed into three modules, meaning learners need only make three assessment submissions, aiding retention and success.



FE Week Experts

Nowt right with rote



English and maths may well be key to learning, but let's not forget the practical skills of time management, teamwork and communications, according to Graham Hasting-Evans of the National Open College Network (NOCN)

Hardly a day goes by without the government, business groups or some MP having their say on the state of our education system, schools and exams.

We all know education is essential and our politicians need to set the policy agenda. However, we must get it right for the 21st Century not try to fix the problems of the 20th century.

It is critical we also listen to employers about the skills they need our young people to have – evidenced in the debates last week at the CBI Conference with its calls for more vocational educations and a focus on employability skills.

Education Secretary Michael Gove is particularly verbose with personal words of wisdom on teaching and learning - they litter the pages of the more serious daily newspapers.

I'm not sure whether anyone has already coined the phrase 'Goveism', but I'm going to use it now.

The last few weeks have been particularly prolific for 'Goveisms'. But one that Mr Gove is particularly focused on is learning by rote.

It comes up time and again, and to us at the National Open College Network (NOCN) it's particularly disturbing.

The dictionary definition of rote is: "A memorising process using routine or repetition, often without full attention or comprehension."

How scary a thought is that? Can you imagine an electrician or a doctor repeating procedures without comprehension?

I don't mean to be flippant but there's a time and a place for rote, and I don't think the 21st Century, in our schools and colleges, qualify. We need to prepare our young people for the global skills market that is already upon us.

Indeed, Louise Robinson, president of the Girls' School Association, argued schools should prepare pupils for the Star Trek society of the 2020s rather than look back at the 1950s and 60s.

I have to agree, but with 2020 just eight years away, I believe we should be more ambitious for our young people's futures.

Schools and colleges need to focus on ensuring that young people have the necessary skills to become productive members of the workforce - and by workforce I don't mean 'blue collar' factory workers who perform their tasks by 'rote' - those days are long gone.

Our workforce is one of diversity and innovators, and innovation doesn't evolve through rote learning.

People need to be able to take responsibility, use their initiative and react to constantly-changing circumstances.

Our future is global. Britain was recently ranked the most powerful nation on Earth.

Monocle magazine's annual Global Soft Power survey, published this month, ranks nations according to their standard of government, diplomatic infrastructure, cultural output, capacity for education and appeal to business. They placed Britain top.

The global jobs market is already in place for millions of Britons and we need to equip our young people to compete with the best from other nations.

Such 21st Century skills are learned by practical exercises that engage and excite young people and integrate the necessary skills within exercises and activities that can be applied to real life situations. And certainly not by rote.

But these skills aren't just the domain of post-16 learning - primary schools should be looking to their pupils' futures too.

Young people need crucial "employability" skills as identified by the employer organisations. The Confederation of British Industry, Federation of Small Businesses, British Chambers of Commerce and employers themselves - and increasingly universities - are calling for these skills, too.

Such skills include English and maths, but also IT, time management, teamwork, communications, problem-solving and, crucially, a work ethic – one that's not just about turning up on time and not going off sick every Friday.

The future workforce needs to be reliable, show initiative and pursue new skills because these aren't just skills for work they're skills for a successful life.

Graham Hasting-Evans, managing director of National Open College Network (NOCN)

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FE Week campus round-up

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Celebrities take on Future Car Challenge



From left: motor vehicle technician apprentice Chris Simons, 20, racing driver Ben Collins, and motor vehicle lecturer Bill Darnbrook

Celebrities at the wheel of cars never seen before on England's roads, called in at a Sussex college as part of a challenge to drive 63 miles using the least energy possible.

Olympic swimmer Ross Davenport sped into Central Sussex College's Crawley campus in a Toyota Prius Plug in, Top Gear's former Stig Ben Collins was driving a Nissan Leaf, and former Radio 1 DJ Mark Goodier was in a Mitsubishi i-Miev for the annual Brighton to London RAC Future Car Challenge.

The 35 drivers were greeted with bacon butties served by hospitality and catering students when they stopped by at the college for the third year running. The college's motorsport team was also on-hand to demonstrate some of the technology used by the department.

Tom Purves, chair of The Royal Automobile Club, said: "This has been an excellent event and I want to thank all the drivers, entrants and sponsors who put so much effort into making it a success."

Stanley, 94, goes silver surfing



Online with Stanley Lee

Ninety-year-old Stanley Lee has been getting to grips with getting online thanks to a free IT course for mature students at a Hampshire college.

The IT for over 50s classes, run at Barton Peveril College, focus on the basics of using a computer and accessing the internet. Stanley is one of the oldest learners at the college.

"I don't like sitting still but this keeps me busy and is a good way of staying in contact with the outside world," he said."My grandson's work takes him overseas a lot so I want to keep in touch by email."

Elizabeth Caush, adult learning business development manager, said: "It's my firm belief that it's never too late to learn, also that more mature learners appreciate the relaxed atmosphere in which this course is taught.

"Some people who have completed the course can now email grandchildren and children abroad, keep in touch with friends, search websites for good deals and research their individual interests online. For those determined to embrace new technology it really does open up a whole new world."

Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable



RAF museum apprentice Laura Pringle, 20

RAF carpenter claims apprentice of the year title

A student training in carpentry at a Royal Air Force (RAF) museum in Shropshire has been crowned Apprentice of the Year.

Laura Pringle, 20, who studies at City of Wolverhampton College, was presented with the award for the intermediate category at the Skills Show in Birmingham.

"I am overwhelmed with excitement and seeing the pride on my mum's face when I told her has made all the effort worthwhile," said Laura.

Mick Shepherd, the RAF museum's training manager, said: "Laura initially applied to become an engineer specialising in the restoration of metal aircraft. However, during her interview she showed such an enthusiasm for the work being done in our carpentry workshop that we asked her to be our first aircraft carpentry apprentice.

"Laura's progress so far proves it was the right decision for us as well as Laura."

"She joined us in 2010 and since then has gone from strength to strength not just at work but also in her studies with City of Wolverhampton College."

Colleges Week kicks off with a bang in Crewe

Revamping a church, producing a radio show and nail art demonstrations were among the activities to celebrate Colleges Week.

South Cheshire College students kicked off the week with a Get into the Christmas Spirit coffee morning, which raised £60 for Help for Heroes, and then hit the Market Centre with dance performances.

Decorating students painted the Christadelphian Church in Crewe during the week while media students created a community news show at RedShift Radio station.

"This has been a great opportunity to organise activities in the community and promote the college at the same time," said events management student James Vickers, 26.

Peter Swift, principal, said: "We are very pleased to have supported Colleges Week with a series of eye-catching activities.

"The aim was to show what the college is all about in the wider community and the events taking place in and around Crewe gave us the perfect opportunity to do that.

"It is important that we give people the opportunity to get into work, improve their chances of finding employment and help to maintain or improve skills which can boost their performance in the workplace."



Ciaran Rooney, 16, brushes up on his skills at the Christadelphian Church in Crewe

Media savvy students make careers DVD



From left: editor and camerman Connor Sharod-Southam, 17, principal Campbell Christie, chief executive of Bracknell Forest Homes Caroline Titley, and audio technician Rob Williams, 18

Media students in Berkshire have created a film to help young people decide what their next step should be after finishing their GCSEs.

The What is Work Ready DVD has been sent out to local schools to be watched by thousands of students.

Bracknell and Wokingham College students scripted the film, interviewed local employers and employees on their views on work readiness, and composed the soundtrack.

Student Connor Sharod-Southam, who operated the camera and edited the DVD, said: "I found the experience really useful and I think it's made me much more prepared for the world of work. Asking employers to volunteer their time then briefing them on what we wanted them to say for the video gave me skills I will use all the way through my working life."

Principal Campbell Christie said: "I am hoping the DVD will be seen as a great way to get the message about employability across.

"I also hope that other keen young college film crews around the country will be inspired to put their own local stamp on the template and continue to put this crucial work ready message across."



Can apprentice brush off the competition?

Painting and decorating apprentice Daniel Warner, 19

A West Midlands student has been brushing up on his skills for a chance to win £2,000.

Walsall College painting and decorating apprentice, Daniel Warner, 19, will be tested on his paint and tool selection, as well as how he applies stencils, at the Young Painter of the Year finals, run by Johnstone's.

"I've been putting some extra practice in ahead of the final and I'm really looking forward to showing my skills on the day. It would be amazing to win," said Daniel.

Barry Hill, construction curriculum manager, said: "Daniel is an exceptional apprentice and is a credit to the college and his tutors. He is also a great ambassador for the apprenticeship programme itself, demonstrating the high level of skills those undertaking this kind of training can achieve."

Arthur's a silver learner after 40 years at college



From left: tutor Mark Veevers with silversmith student Arthur Holder

The lounge of 94-year-old student Arthur Holder is filled with more than 200 handcrafted pieces of silverware.

There are vases, jugs, and bowls — and all made by the grandfather-of-two at Chesterfield College, where he has been studying on a silversmith course for nearly four decades.

"I love to be able to create," said former estate agent and surveyor Arthur.

"When I was in business, I had up in the attic two and half tonnes of paper in files.

"That's one of the reasons I started, I'd been working all those years, but what had I got to show for it? Nearly three tonnes of paper.

"Now I've been working for 38 years on silver and I've got more than 200 beautiful items.

"It's fun and very fulfilling. I haven't missed a year and I won't ever stop, I'll be going on until I'm 100."

Widower Arthur said he'd always been interested in silver and enrolled at the college in 1971 after a neighbour told him about the course. And this month he was presented with a lifelong learning award at the college's annual Aspire Awards.

"I felt like a fish out of water at the ceremony, standing there with all those young people, but I felt really proud when I got the award," said Arthur, who has seen the price of silver go up from £3 to £30 per ounce since he has been at the college.

"It was very much appreciated, I've made a stand for it and it's on display in my lounge."

As well as his house being packed full of items he's made and collected, Arthur has built a workshop at home so he can work on pieces all week. But he said he still attended the college because it had better equipment and he loved the environment.

"I'm always thinking about what I'm going to make next," said Arthur, who has two grown-up children in Chris, 54, and Rosalie, 58, who has also recently taken up silversmithing.

"It's a fantastic hobby. It enables you to use your hands and your brain at the same time. It's hard physical work, hammering away at the silver, but I really enjoy it."

Arthur, who goes to college once a week, visits fairs and auctions for inspiration, as well as looking through books on pieces from the past. He also gives talks on silver at different clubs.

Arthur's tutor, Mark Veevers, said: "Arthur is a real inspiration to not only me, but also other students.

"He is enthusiastic and energetic and over the years has become very skilled in many aspects of silversmithing.

"He encourages other students to aspire to make great things and he has inspired me to continue working in precious metals as long as I am able to stand up on my own. He is a wonderful bloke and I am privileged to have known him for so long."

College principal Trevor Clay said: "Arthur really is an inspiration to us all. He's a shining example that you're never too old to learn and that a passion for learning doesn't fade over time."

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FE Week campus round-up

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College Olympian sprints to academic success



Principal Cathy Walsh with Adam Gemili, 19

Olympic runner Adam Gemili has sprinted his way to academic victory.

The 19-year-old 100 metres champion picked up two awards at Barking and Dagenham College's Excellence Awards having received a distinction for his extended diploma in sport.

"It's really great to be recognised for the time I spent at the college," said the World Junior Championships gold medal winner. "I had two great years there, I learned so much and made so many good friends. I'm really pleased to get this award and be able to represent the college."

He scooped student of the year at the awards ceremony held at Broadway Theatre in Barking, as well as a sports and public services industries trophy.

His tutor Errol Parker praised how he kept focus on his studies even while training and competing at the highest international level. "He always met deadlines, never made excuses, came to college when he could, and remained in touch with his tutors throughout his training," he said.

Claire Young, finalist of reality television programme The Apprentice 2008, spoke at the ceremony. She said: "Tonight has been absolutely brilliant, and I think it's fantastic that the college is recognising success and recognising that students are working hard and excelling."

Students bring movie magic to centre



From left: Leeds City College students Dale McDonald, 18, Hollie Leighton, 18, Jordan Battye, 18, Amy Quinn, 20, Rob Birch, 18, Jed McGinnity,17, and Jack Richardson, 21

A community centre now has its own movie theatre thanks to ten West Yorkshire students.

The Prince's Trust Team at Leeds City College installed a high definition projector, sound system, created a mural of movie legends, and put up drapes for the cinema at Kentmere Community Centre in Seacroft.

The students hope the theatre will help tackle social isolation among senior citizens living in Leeds.

Team leader Elliott Ward said: "The project has been a great success and has been very well received by the centre and its users. We hope this will lead to us doing more projects with the centre; it has already been noticed by Joanne Brook of Leeds City Council and hopefully this will lead to more beneficial and exciting projects for future Prince's Trust Teams to get involved in."

The cinema has proved popular with centre users. Barbara Kelly said: "These young people have spent a lot of time doing this and it looks really good. It will be nice to come here on an afternoon, get away from it all and enjoy a film."



From left: Student Stephanie Jones, 18, with lecturer Steve Donnison

Public tuck into sausage masterclasses

The public was let loose on the sausage machines at a North Eastern college.

Hundreds of sausages were made by people taking part in masterclasses at Middlesbrough College to mark British Sausage Week, where they learned how to mix the different meats with herbs before operating the filling machines.

The pork and leek, Cumberland and breakfast sausages were sold to the public and served at the college's Café 66.

Catering lecturer Steve Donnison, who has been at the college for nine years, led the classes.

He said: "Sausage-making is just one of the technical skills we teach catering students during their time at the college.

"We provide them with all the skills they need to have a successful career and to be employable. For example in addition to cookery skills like fish-mongering and sausage-making we also teach them other skills including restaurant production and time-keeping."

Colleges Week kicks off with a bang in Crewe



From left: BPEC charity trustee George Thompson and lecturer Martin Biron

A lecturer has been awarded £6,000 for creating a virtual central heating system to help teach plumbing students.

Head of construction at the College of North West London Martin Biron received the development award from the charity BPEC at its first ever Life Awards ceremony in Derby.

Mr Biron said: "As an educator, over the past five years I have been driven with a passion to develop educational resources to encourage individuals to develop the skills needed to become competent and proficient plumbers.

The virtual world allows users to create an avatar that can fly around the central heating and solar thermal systems. The ability to zoom into the components enables students to discover far more than they could do in the real life.

The cash will be reinvested to fund the online 3D world for a further two years.

BPEC chairman Frank Glover said: "Each of the award finalists has shown how plumbing can make a difference to life, and we congratulate the College of North West London for being among this year's recipients."

New partnership to widen participation



A new partnership has brought together two organisations with a combined total of more than 150 years' experience in delivering adult education.

The Workers' Education Association (WEA) and the Open University (OU) hope to reverse a recent decline in adult learning by working together.

Research from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) published in September suggested there has been a four per cent drop in adults participating in education since 2010.

The OU and WEA plan to develop campaigns together on widening participation.

Martin Bean, vice-chancellor of the OU, said: "If we're going to get Britain's economy back on track, we have to make sure that workers of all ages have the skills they need to compete — it's not enough just to focus on 18-year-old school leavers. I'm delighted that the OU and WEA will be working together to open up higher education to an even wider range of adult learners, helping to make that vision a reality."

Ruth Spellman, chief executive of the WEA, said recent increases in social inequality could only be addressed if people have access to the education services that enable them to reach their full potential.



Archaeology students go absolutely potty

Archaeology students in the North West have enjoyed a cracking hands-on practical session as part of their college course.

The second year A-Level group at South Cheshire College were given broken pots of different shapes and sizes and had the task of restoring them to their former glory using reconstruction techniques.

Peter Scott from Sourdust Pottery in Stocksfield, Northumberland made the pottery especially for students to use during the session.

Dr Jonathan Hills, lecturer at the college, said the session was an excellent opportunity to see how archaeologists work out in the field.

"The session focussed on acquainting the students with the techniques that archaeologists use to reconstruct vessels from archaeological sites."

Student Ashley Philips, 17, of Wrenbury, said: "This was a really interesting session and as well as being able to handle pottery it also gave us the chance to see how archaeologists work to piece together the past. Some pots were harder than others to piece back together but it was an excellent challenge."

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FE Week's glitzy auction in aid of HKF

Chris Henwood

@chrishenwood

An *FE Week* charity auction night held in the grand setting of Birmingham's Grade II-listed Council House raised at least £5,500 for the Helena Kennedy Fund.

More than 100 guests attended the event on Tuesday, November 20, including National Institute of Adult Continuing Education chief executive David Hughes and Learning and Skills Improvement Service chair Dame Ruth Silver.

Principals and staff from providers such as Solihull College, Milton Keynes College and East Kent College were also there and enjoyed table-to-table entertainment from 11-year-old yo-yo trickster David Braden Holmes and psychological magician Mark Cairns.

Among the top auction earners were a sports car experience day that went for £200, dinner for two at the House of Lords with Neil Kinnock for £240 and an iPad at £370.

And more than £1,200 of the night's takings came from the sale of £5 raffle strips with prizes on offer including a night at an Edinburgh hotel and a tour of Premier League football club Newcastle United's St James's Park stadium plus dinner.

The evening was kicked off by *FE Week* director of operations Shane Mann before charity chair Dr Ann Limb OBE introduced the night's star guest, Athens 2004 Paralympics wheelchair basketball bronze medallist Ade Adepitan MBE.

The 39-year-old, who anchored Channel Four's coverage of this year's Paralympics with Clare Balding, is a patron of the fund, which hands out cash to disadvantaged students to help them go on to higher education.

He gave a speech on how his life had been affected by childhood polio and said: "Everybody needs a little help in their lives, some more than others.

"Two of the most powerful things in the world are sport and education, and I'm here because I benefited from both."

Ade was presented with an ambassador's bowl to mark his dedication to the fund, before a second bowl was given to 157 Group executive director Lynne Sedgmore.

"All I want to say is thank you to all involved in this event and also the Helena Kennedy Fund - it epitomises what further education is all about, and that's transforming lives," she said.

The night, which was supported by NCFE and Tribal, takes *FE Week's* fund-raising for the charity to at least £15,500 in just over a year.

Nick Linford, *FE Week* editor, said: "It was so great to see a host of high-profile FE figures come along and support us and, more importantly, the Helena Kennedy Fund.

"To have raised such a huge amount of money in the space of just over a year - and for such a worthy cause - was beyond my wildest dreams.

"All I can say is a huge 'thank you' to all those involved who really helped to make it a night to remember."



From left. Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group, is presented with a HKF ambassador's bowl by Ann Limb, HKF



Nick Linford, editor of *FE Week*, was host and auctioneer for the evening



The dinner and auction was held at the Birmingham's Council House



Julie Nugent, Birmingham Met College, with David Hughes, NIACE, who won a bottle of whisky signed by Ed Miliband MP, in the raffle



From left: Graham Towse, Grimsby Institute Group (GIG), Julie Moore, GIG, Ade Adepitan, Ellen Thinessen GIG and Amanda Rudolph, GIG. Mr Towse paid £500 for a paralympic T-shirt signed by Mr Adepitan





From left: Sarah Linford shows off the floral display, created by Maureen Palmer and students from Solihull College



Shane Chowen, policy adviser at the Institure for Learning, bids during the auction



Barry Brookes, Director for Education and Skills Strategy at Tribal Group



Alasdair Downes, director of business development at NCFE

Dearne Valley College

To apply for the advertised positions, or find details of any other vacancies, please go to **www.dearne-coll.ac.uk**

Curriculum Leader - Maths Ref: HR25.

Curriculum Leader - English Ref: HR26.

£35,247 per annum.
37 hours per week.

Proactively drive and manage Maths or English provision across College mainstream programmes.

Lecturer in Automotive Technology Ref: HR27.

£23,284 to £27,813 per annum.
37 hours per week.

Delivering and assessing learning within Motor Vehicle Body Repair, Light Vehicle Maintenance and Motorsport.

All posts are subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

Closing date for applications: Thursday 6th December 2012 (noon).

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

www.dearne-coll.ac.uk

GRIMSBY INSTITUTE GROUP

Full Time Learning Tutor in AAT/Business Ref: G001

We are looking for an experienced and dynamic person with qualifications and expertise in the field of AAT and accountancy to join our new Curriculum team as we work together and build on the success of learners within the School of Business Enterprise and Computing.

Candidates must have AAT qualifications up to L4 and suitable industrial experience. Prior attainment of teaching qualifications is desirable however candidates wishing to commence a career in teaching will be considered alongside the commitment to undertake relevant teaching qualifications in an allotted timescale.

Salary negotiable dependant on qualifications and experience. Please contact Matt Bellamy for further details on this exciting post: bellamym@grimsby.ac.uk

Closing date: 28th November 2012

Interview date: 6th December 2012

Download an application form at: www.latestvacancies.com/grimsby

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

MIS Manager
Salary £31,704 - £35,568 per annum

Bracknell & Wokingham College is a successful, medium sized college of general further education, specialising in 14+ learning and part-time courses for adults. We enrol over 1,200 16-18 year olds and 8,000 adults every year and run around 700 courses in the day, at night and at weekends at over 20 local centres in Bracknell, Wokingham and surrounding areas.

We currently have an exciting opportunity for an experienced MIS professional to manage the development and administration of the College's Management Information Systems to deliver timely and accurate college data and funding claims.

We are looking for a flexible and positive individual with significant experience of working with FE funding regulations, systems and audit compliance. You will demonstrate the ability and experience of quickly interpreting and identifying the implications of issues affecting the College, using data wherever possible. Knowledge and experience of the Further Education sector and current funding methodology is essential together with the ability to ensure that systems in place operate efficiently and effectively to enable the College to maximise potential funding.

If you feel you have the qualities and experience we are asking for and are looking for a new and exciting challenge then please visit our website **www.bracknell.ac.uk/system_pages/navigation/side/work_for_us.aspx** and download an information pack and application form.

Closing date for applications: 6 December 2012
Interview date: 13 December 2012

Church Road, Bracknell, Berkshire. RG12 1DJ
T: 01344 766465 • E: hr@bracknell.ac.uk
www.bracknell.ac.uk

Bracknell & Wokingham College

JOIN US...

Learning Curve

Learning Curve Skill Centres

Head of Skill Centres £35 - £45k plus PRP

Learning Curve Skill Centres are looking to recruit an experienced manager to head up and grow its new Skill Centres. Learning Curve Skill Centres were established to focus on NEET learners and engage them into vocational training and support them back into the workplace.

We have centres based in Middlesbrough, Bishop Auckland, Sunderland, Wakefield and Leeds providing a wide range of vocational programmes from construction to pre-uniformed services.

This is a very rewarding role for an ambitious manager with sound business acumen.

The successful candidate must have a strong background in education and also have excellent budgeting and financial management skills.
You will need to be self-motivated, organised and have excellent interpersonal skills. Successful candidates will have a proven track record of commercial business experience.

You will be results-oriented, naturally persuasive and have the ability to build on a range of successful, existing partnerships as well as developing new ones.

To apply for this post please send your C.V. With covering letter to **Christine.Mason@learning-curve.co.uk** by **3rd December 2012**

www.learning-curve.co.uk

Bexley College
Inspiration For The Future

FUNDING AND DATA MANAGER

£31,299 to £38,496 per annum

Ref: 271213

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced professional to manage and develop the College's student management and information systems.

We are seeking to appoint a passionate, innovative and inspiring leader with experience of proactively identifying, developing and presenting the timely provision of curriculum and performance management information to enable effective strategic and operational decision making.

You will have a demonstrable management track record of success with experience of successfully and accurately working to deadlines. Knowledge and experience of the Further Education sector and current funding methodology is essential together with the ability to ensure that systems are in place operate efficiently and effectively to enable the College to maximise potential funding.

If you have the skills and experience and would like to be part of our exciting future we would like to hear from you.

If you feel you have the qualities we are asking for and are looking for a new and exciting challenge then please apply online at www.bexley.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can email us at hr@bexley.ac.uk or call our 24 hour recruitment line for an application pack on **01322 404240.**

Please note the College does not accept CV's only.

Bexley College is committed to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and all posts are subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure prior to starting employment. The College looks to positively promote equality of opportunity and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community.

Closing date: 7th December 2012

Curriculum Team Manager – Plumbing & Electrical

£33,205 to £36,285 per annum

Ref: 191213

Bexley College is looking for an enthusiastic and dedicated manager to provide leadership to the team and management of all aspects of curriculum including, development, monitoring, reporting, course compliance and delivery resulting in outstanding teaching and learning and student achievement.

This role will focus on operational leadership, quality assurance and learning & teaching. Some delivery is required within your specialist subject area.

You must demonstrate proven experience and skills associated with the assessment and development of a quality student experience and knowledge of College data systems and the manner in which they can be used to improve student performance.

If you feel you have the qualities we are asking for and are looking for a new and exciting challenge then please apply online at www.bexley.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can email us at hr@bexley.ac.uk or call our 24 hour recruitment line for an application pack on **01322 404240.**

Please note the College does not accept CV's only.

Bexley College is committed to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and all posts are subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure prior to starting employment. The College looks to positively promote equality of opportunity and welcomes applicants from all sections of the community.

Closing date: 7th December 2012

College Leadership Services
Expertise in FE

Follow us on Twitter:
@Expertise_in_FE

Our expertise and commitment lie in Further Education. Does yours?

College Leadership Services is passionate about delivering a range of solutions to our clients.
Due to increasing demand, we are seeking to expand our candidate and associate pools for three of our key services:

Our Human Resources Task Force
has an outstanding reputation in delivering the right HR solution to a range of colleges.

Merger, restructure, reward and employee relations are just some of the areas in which we offer expert advice and guidance. Full Project Management and Business Process outsourcing are also important aspects of our service to a sector facing a future full of challenge. If you are fully CIPD qualified, have senior HR experience and can offer some understanding of the FE context, perhaps you have what it takes to join us?

Our Interim Management and Consultancy Service
provides outstanding interim managers and experienced consultants who specialise in the Further Education sector.

To meet the high levels of growth in this area, we are looking to add to our team of high quality interims and associates. We are looking for senior and middle managers with experience in all curriculum areas as well as quality, MIS, finance, learner services and commercial relationships.

Our Middle Management Recruitment Service
has established a successful track record in working with colleges on their permanent management appointments.

By understanding the sector, we find colleges the best talent available, first time, achieving a 100% success rate last year. If you are an aspiring manager of the future, or a current manager considering your next move, then we would be delighted to hear from you.



If you share our passion for the sector and feel that you have the skills and experience to make a difference, you are warmly invited to contact **Helen Anderson on 0115 911 1117** who will arrange an informal discussion with one of our team.

In the first instance a copy of your CV can be forwarded to **David Beynon** at **dbeynon@collegeleadership.co.uk**

OUR INTERIM MANAGERS AND HR TASK FORCE ASSOCIATES ARE SELF-EMPLOYED AND RECEIVE COMPETITIVE RATES OF PAY

LIFE CHANGING LAKES COLLEGE

Lakes College is situated on the edge of the beautiful Lake District National Park and Solway coast. Our new, state of the art single site has been expanded for two new exciting capital developments, a 14-19 performing arts centre and a new construction skills centre to meet the skills needs of the Britain's Energy Coast after successfully securing £7m of funding from local stakeholders.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

An initial salary of circa £43.5K with potential for progression dependent upon satisfactory performance management review to £46k

We offer 37 days annual leave plus up to 3 days for Christmas shut down period; 8 bank holidays and 2 discretionary days plus a final salary pension scheme and additional benefits package.

We seek a HR professional to join our Strategic Management Team to lead and develop the delivery of the college's HR Strategy and Learning and Development Plans and further organisation development in support of our college's strategic objectives.

It is essential that you have a strong team ethos and are able to work collaboratively with colleagues, applying creative, customer focused solutions to people management issues across the College.

As a CIPD qualified HR professional, you will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills, a thorough knowledge of employment law, substantial experience of working with trade unions and of human resources and learning development in a strategic HR/operational development environment and have evidence of a strong track record of supporting transformational change and delivering results. If you recognise yourself from the above and have the energy, drive and ambition to join us on our journey to Outstanding we would like to hear from you.

Interviews are scheduled to be held on Friday 14 December 2012

COURSE LEADER – PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

An initial salary of circa £26.5k – £33.5k dependent upon teaching qualifications and experience.

We offer 42 days annual leave plus up to 3 days for Christmas shut down period; 8 bank holidays and 2 discretionary days plus a final salary pension scheme and additional benefits package.

Lakes College currently offers a successful portfolio of commercial and professional business management programmes up to level 7 and we are looking to expand this provision to offer CIPD and other professional qualifications. We are seeking someone who can demonstrate a successful track record of delivering on commercial/professional programmes and HRM pathways and to take the lead in establishing the delivery of professional qualifications in particular CIPD.You will have proven experience of successfully delivering to HNC/HND level business management and CIPD qualifications, hold a degree level in Management/HRM or equivalent and an assessors qualification. Ideally you will hold a teaching qualification or be willing to work towards.

Interviews are scheduled to be held on Wednesday 9 January 2013

Closing date for both posts is **Friday 7 December 2012 (12:00 noon)**

To apply online and to download further information about these roles please logon to the college website **www.lcwc.ac.uk/vacancies**

www.lcwc.ac.uk

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

Lakes College West Cumbria

CHRIST THE KING SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Christ the King is a highly successful and heavily oversubscribed Catholic sixth form college located in south east London. We specialise in meeting the needs of 16-19 year old students and have an established track record of excellent examinations success. We have Category A financial status and have been recognised by Ofsted as delivering outstanding quality of provision.

Data Manager £35,772 - 38,209 pa

The role involves taking responsibility for student records, assessment data, curriculum structure, timetabling and filing returns with funding bodies. Hands-on experience with Capita's Unit-e MIS and an ability to tailor it to the needs of the College is highly desirable but not obligatory.

Closing Date: 4pm Friday 7th December 2012
Interviews to take place w/b 10th December 2012

For an application form and further details visit our website: www.ctksfc.ac.uk/vacancies or contact the Personnel Department on 020 8309 4760 e-mail d.baldwin@ctksfc.ac.uk

To advertise here contact Chardelle Mason on 020 8123 4891

HOT NEWS FE Week ANALYSIS AND JOBS



LIFE CHANGING LAKES COLLEGE

Lakes College West Cumbria is situated on the edge of the beautiful Lake District National Park and Solway Coast. Our new, state of the art single site has been expanded for two new exciting capital developments, a 14-19 performing arts centre and a new construction skills centre to meet the needs of the Britain's Energy Coast after successfully securing £7m of funding from local stakeholders.

Our 300 staff continue to push the boundaries of FE and with a "one college" approach, work collaboratively with external partnerships to make a difference to our students and the local West Cumbrian community.

Lecturer - Computing Ref: EBCT 04/12

Initial salary depending on experience and qualifications within salary scale £23.5k - £33.5k

Our computing department has expanded and continues to grow and we now have an opportunity for a dynamic and enthusiastic individual to join the team.

- Are you qualified to HND Level in Computing or Multimedia and possess up to date experience in Computing & Multimedia technologies?
- Do you have experience in Programming and Agile Development?
- Experience and skills in Web Design & Development, Animation and Multi-Media?

If the answer is YES, then we want to hear from you.

Ideally we are looking to appoint a full time member of staff for this position; however, consideration will be given to applicants who prefer part time working.

Not a qualified lecturer? No worries – the college will support you in-house with the support of our outstanding teacher education department.

Closing Date: Friday 7 December 2012 (12 Noon)
Interview Date: Thursday 10 January 2013

To apply online and to download further information about these roles please logon to the college website **www.lcwc.ac.uk/vacancies**

www.lcwc.ac.uk

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

Lakes College West Cumbria

SPRINGBOARD BROMLEY

CSV and Springboards are proud to employ around 550 staff all over the UK.

Are you ready to join Springboard Bromley and be part of the UK's leading

volunteering and learning charity?

Training Officer Functional and Key Skills

Salary: Scale 5, Starting salary £8553 p.a. for 14hpw Inc. OLW
Job ref: TED 1224

Teaching Assistant

Salary: Scale 4, Starting salary £18,918 p.a. Inc. OLW
Job ref: TED 1225

Learning Training Officer (Construction)

Salary: Scale 5, Starting salary £21,378 p.a. Inc. OLW
Job ref: TED 1226

Catering Training Officer

Salary: Scale 5, Starting salary £17,103 p.a. for 28hpw Inc. OLW
Job ref: TED 1227

For further information or to download an application pack, please visit www.csv.org.uk/about-us/jobs Alternatively please contact Damian Atkinson on datkinson@springboardbromely.org.uk or call 020 8460 7555 quoting the reference number.

Location: Bromley.
Closing date for all roles: 30th November 2012

Nescot
Epsom's college of further and higher education

Lecturer in Performing Arts (Acting)

Part time (0.6) up to £18,976 p.a. or Sessional Hours at £26.82 per hour

NESCOT is a successful college based in Epsom, Surrey which offers both Further and Higher Education courses. Our financial position, reputation, quality and curriculum are all strong. The college was inspected in September 2010; all areas were graded 'good' or 'outstanding'. The report highlighted a number of 'outstanding' areas including finance, capacity to improve, leadership and management.

We are currently recruiting to the following post:

We are looking for enthusiastic, dynamic and experienced people to teach Performing Arts, specifically Acting, to level 2 and level 3 students. You will be required to teach at various levels ranging from first Diploma, National Diploma and possibly Higher National Diploma, as well as taking on a tutor group of your own. Applicants with experience of teaching singing would also be very welcome.

Applicants will most likely have industry experience as well as a relevant academic and/or professional qualification in the subject area, together with a recognised teaching qualification or the willingness to undertake appropriate training, for which support will be given. You will need to be highly organised and flexible in your approach to work. You will enjoy a challenge, and ideally have experience of working within a team. You should have a passion for working with people of all ages, especially young adults and school leavers.

Ideally you will have teaching or training experience. You will have a high level of interpersonal, motivational, communication and organisation skills. A commitment to student learning and attainment is essential.

Closing date: Midnight Sunday 2 December 2012 | Interviews will be held on: Tuesday 11 December 2012

For full details of the post, additional information on the College and details of how to make your application please visit **www.nescot.ac.uk** and follow the link for **'Working at Nescot'.** If you experience any difficulties in accessing the site please contact the HR Department on **0208 394 3304.**

Don't forget to check out our jobs board online at: www.feweek.co.uk

HOT NEWS FE Week ANALYSIS AND JOBS



DRIVING AMBITION INSPIRING SUCCESS

Middlesbrough College engages with over 12,000 students each year in the widest range of subject areas and as such is the largest provider of Further Education in the Tees Valley. Middlesbrough College is a thriving and buoyant institution – recruiting record numbers of full-time students, achieving consistently strong examination results and gaining its reputation and profile as a major 'player' in the Tees Valley and beyond, raising standards and economic prospects across the region. Middlesbrough College is ambitious for its community and place inclusion and excellence at the heart of its core values. The College moved to its 'state of the art' building in 2008 and has just opened a £7 million Sixth Form Centre (MC6) in 2012 and invests over £1.5 million every year in capital resources. This record of achievement is delivered by the College's most prized asset, its staff.

middlesbrough college

Middlesbrough College is looking to recruit 2 exceptional Directors to join its strong College Leadership Team to further drive forward its Mission Statement of "Driving Ambition and Inspiring Success".

Director of A Levels (MC6)

REF: DIR1 (Salary £41,028 - £48,259) Permanent, full time, 37 hours per week

As the Director of AS/A Level provision, this is a wonderful opportunity to join an energetic and successful team. The College is looking for a person committed to generating further growth based on success and reputation. The Department has grown significantly this year, has moved into a custom built £7m Sixth Form Centre and continues to raise the standards with superb results this year including a 100% A level Pass Rate alongside outstanding value added. There is still more to be done and that's where you come in. The College wants to further grow its student numbers, improve its high grades, grow its range of offer, and achieve excellence and inclusion. The successful candidate will also have a fantastic opportunity for personal growth and professional development.

Interview dates are scheduled for the 13 & 14 January 2013.

Director of Business Management and Professional Development

REF: DIR2 (Salary £41,028 - £48,259) Permanent, full time, 37 hours per week

This is a great opportunity for developing a thriving and buoyant Department. The opportunity exists to grow across all areas, both on full-time 16-18 years olds and 19+ full and part-time. The College is likely to make a significant capital contribution to support its ambitious plans for this area. This investment reflects its ambition and determination to give students in Middlesbrough and the wider Tees Valley the very best in high quality education. Middlesbrough College is therefore looking for an exceptional leader with ambition, skills and drive to build upon recent advances and to make significant progress. If you see high quality education and training as a moral imperative, then the College would really like to hear from you.

For an Informal discussion on these posts, please contact Mike Hopkins, Principal / Chief Executive on (01642) 333650.
For an Information Pack including an Online Application Form please visit the College Website www.mbro.ac.uk or please contact (01642) 333554, or e-mail recruitment@mbro.ac.uk
Closing date Monday 10 December 2012.
All appointments are subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check and receipt of two satisfactory references.
Middlesbrough College is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.



Working together to deliver success

TRIBAL

ncfe
ncfe.org.uk

Delivering success for colleges and their learners is at the heart of what we do. By working together, NCFE and Tribal offer a combination of relevant and responsive qualifications with cost-effective and high-quality learning materials and support services.

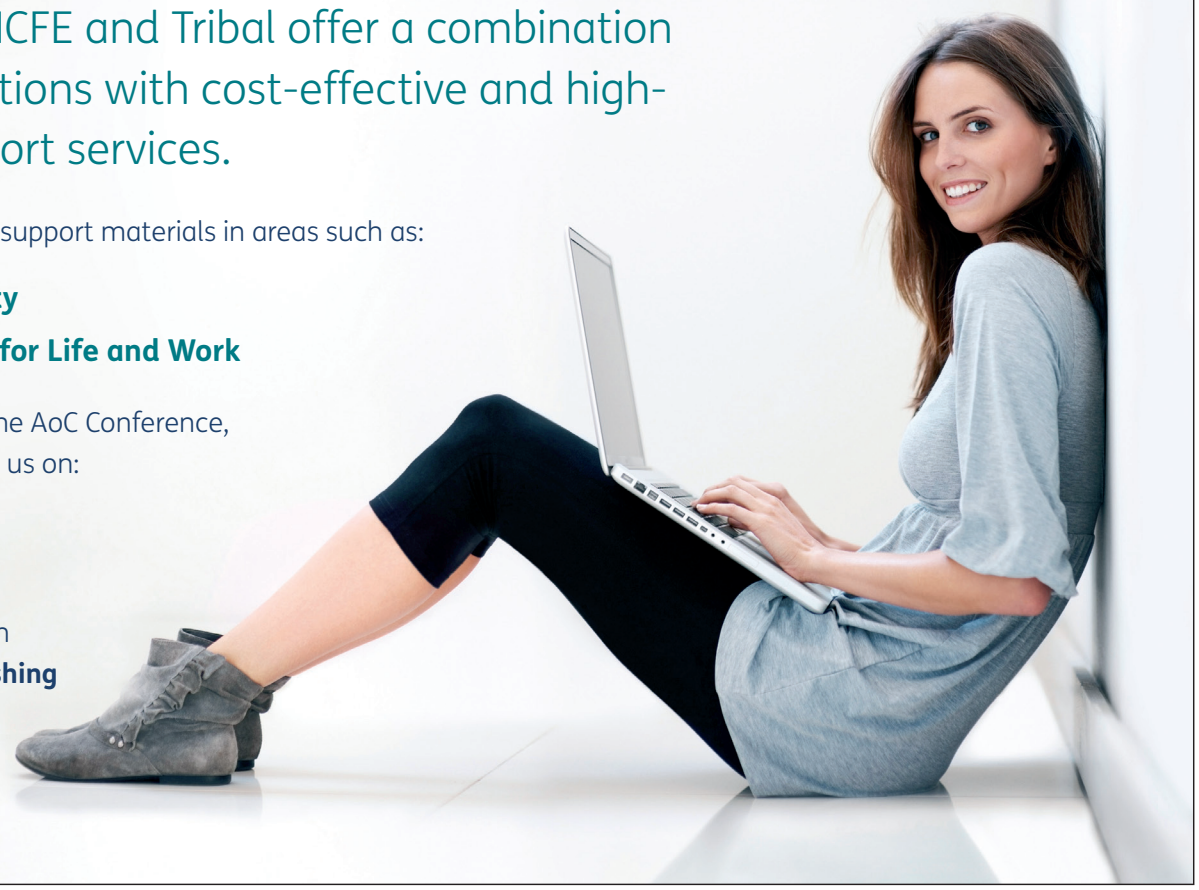
We can provide you with great qualifications and superb support materials in areas such as:

- **Apprenticeships**
- **Employability**
- **Job search and Interview Skills**
- **Preparation for Life and Work**

Come and visit us on Stand 54, Hall 3 and Stand F16 at the AoC Conference, ICC, Birmingham, 20th-22nd November 2012, or contact us on:

NCFE
T: 0191 239 8000
E: info@ncfe.org.uk
www.ncfe.org.uk

TRIBAL
T: 01904 550110
E: publishing@tribalgroup.com
www.tribalgroup.com/publishing



FE Week Sudoku challenge

	2			9	8		3	
3		9			1			8
		6	5			9	2	
9	5			6		7		
1			2		7			6
		3		1			8	4
	8	4			9	3		
2			3			1		5
	3		4	7			6	

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

			8	1		4		
				9	3	8	2	
							6	7
4	7							8
	9	5				2	7	
1							9	5
8	6							
	5	9	3	2				
		4		8	5			

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week's solutions

4	6	1	3	9	7	5	2	8
7	3	8	6	5	2	9	1	4
9	5	2	4	8	1	3	6	7
2	9	3	8	6	4	1	7	5
5	4	6	1	7	3	8	9	2
8	1	7	9	2	5	6	4	3
6	8	4	7	3	9	2	5	1
1	2	9	5	4	8	7	3	6
3	7	5	2	1	6	4	8	9

Difficulty:
EASY

4	9	6	1	5	7	8	2	3
2	7	8	4	3	9	5	1	6
3	1	5	2	8	6	9	7	4
9	4	2	3	6	8	1	5	7
6	3	7	9	1	5	4	8	2
8	5	1	7	2	4	6	3	9
5	8	4	6	7	2	3	9	1
1	2	9	5	4	3	7	6	8
7	6	3	8	9	1	2	4	5

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week Dad and I have been having a go at the Burton and South Derbyshire College Skills Show race track"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford